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Spy Jinks

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Washington.

The Scene: The Kremlin
The Time: The Present

The Chairman enters, glowering. As his aides get to their feet, he waves them back to their seats.

"Well, comrades, I see that the trip to Stockholm is off--again. Every time I am about to go to some interesting country, another one of our agents is caught and my trip is postponed. Am I never to go anywhere except East Berlin?"

The other members of the Presidium maintain tight silence.

"Perhaps the Minister for External Security could tell us what this Swede, this Col. Wennerstrom, found out that was so valuable?"

Comrade Vrunk, a veteran of the NKVD, the OGPU, the MVD, his bald head glittering under the lights, leans forward slightly and makes his report.

"Many valuable photographs of the B-47?" the Chairman harrumphs. "Comrade, the next war is not going to be fought with B-47s. The Americans are already phasing them out of their Air Force. What else did this Swede of yours find out, rushing about America snapping his little secret camera?"

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Comrade Vrunk sighs broadly. He resumes all an account of Col. Wennerstrom's work at the Geneva disarmament talks. Again he is interrupted.

"Enough, enough. We have obviously been paying this man thousands of gold rubles for telling us on Tuesday what the Americans are only too glad to tell us about their disarmament plans on Wednesday. You call this espionage?"

The Chairman, turning to his aide, concludes the discussion. "This man is a waste! He is a man who is squandering in London. He is not sending back incoherent 'A hundred agents' for contact CK.' On '50

pounds entertainment of contact CK.' Now it turns out that this young woman--this Miss Keeler--was not his contact.

"The Minister of External Security told us that through this contact, we were going to learn everything Profumo knew. The only trouble was that Profumo did not know anything--except old telephone numbers."

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"Before that, it was the man Vassall in the Admiralty. What did he ever send us? I'll tell you, comrades, he sent much interesting information about how many rounds of ammunition an old British battleship can fire a minute and whom the Civil Lord of the Admiralty had invited for dinner on Whitsuntide. All kinds of fascinating facts like that. Can the comrade Minister of External Security justify to the honest Soviet workers spending their hard-earned rubles for this kind of rubbish?"

"There is only one thing worse than woman chasers and homosexuals, and that is an Arab expert. And thanks to External Security we now have another one of those on our hands. Haven't our own Arab experts put us into enough trouble in the Middle East? It was bad enough to find jobs for Burgess and Maclean, but now this man Philby turns up. Soon we will have many long memos that nobody has time to read about Turks and Kurds and Baathists and Teenies. Everyone knows there is no such thing as an Arab expert. Studying the Arabs is just a vice of the English--like drinking tea or playing cricket.

"I tell you, comrades, we cannot tolerate much more of this. We must have a complete ban on British agents. Anyone found guilty of hiring another Englishman--male, female, or Arab--will be sent to the virgin lands program. Is that clear?"

All the men around the table nod solemnly. "Good. Now on to serious business. Have we found out anything more about the Chinese?"

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